

# ACADFA

e-BULLETIN: October 2014

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ACAD RESEARCH ETHICS WEEK

November 3rd to 7th

ACAD and ACADFA are proud to present Research Ethics Week. All events will be held in ACAD 371, are FREE and open to everyone in the Alberta College of Art + Design community.

**Questions? Contact Diana Sherlock, Faculty, and Research Ethics Symposium Coordinator**

The goal of the Alberta College of Art + Design's Research Ethics Week is to get people thinking deeply about what kind of research culture we have, and want to have, at ACAD, and to discuss what we need to do to foster this, including ethical practices. Three related topic areas were chosen to guide the shape and content for the week:

#### Research Ethics, Artistic Research and Academic Freedom.

Rodney LaTourelle's The Stepped Form will be installed in 371 and will set the stage for all events and discussions.

In addition to the schedule below, the Library will be featuring related resources on their website and on their shelves during the week. There will also be screenings of related library materials in the off hours of the week. These off hours can also be used to accommodate other contributions that might come forth at the last minute in response to the other presentations.

What results from this Research Ethics Week, will further inform presentations to be included in the March symposium, which will be public and involve more external speakers.

Please join us to participate in this exciting schedule of events.

## ALBERTA COLLEGES & INSTITUTES FACULTY ASSOCIATIONS

### ACIFA Teaching and Learning Award

ACIFA will award up to two grants of \$1,000 each annually for research projects related to improving teaching and learning conducted by members of ACIFA.

Applicants submit their proposal directly to ACIFA by November 15, 2014

Applications are judged by a sub-committee of the

ACIFA Professional Affairs Committee.

The award is funded by

The Alberta Public Post-Secondary Education Trust Fund.

### ACIFA 2014 Award for Innovation In Teaching

ACADFA is now accepting nominations for the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculty Associations' 2015 Award for Innovation in Teaching.

The successful recipient of this award receives \$1500 and ACADFA receives \$500.

The deadline for submitting nominations to the ACIFA office is **February 13, 2015**.

Please contact the ACADFA office if you have any questions about the award.

PLEASE CHECK THE ACIFA WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

<http://www.acifa.ca/>

## CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS (CAUT) BULLETIN AVAILABLE ONLINE

<http://www.cautionline.ca/>

## THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE PRESENTED AT THE ACADFA EXECUTIVE MEETING OCTOBER 22, 2014

### President's Report - Alex Link

I attended ACIFA Presidents' Council on Saturday October 18. I was able to discuss our concerns regarding rank and ratio, informally, particularly with our Labour Relations Officer (LRO). As usual, the conversation over the course of the day was wide-ranging. However, some significant points from the discussion worth capturing include:

- CAFAs concern that we now have our 5<sup>th</sup> Advanced Ed. Minister in 4 years
- ACIFA PAC's concern, that might emerge in a collective position paper, that an outcomes-driven evaluation of academic institutions compromises academic freedom and is, more generally, a short-sighted and instrumental approach to learning
- difficulties some institutions are having with the withdrawal of benefits, and pension, LTD and group life contributions to employees over severely, because the employer's carrier plan doesn't allow for it.
- ACIFA confirmed it had already agreed to pledge funds to the Academic Freedom and Research Ethics event to take place in March. The specific amount will be confirmed shortly.

I have not yet met with our new Board Chair, but it's my understanding an informal meet is being arranged.

I met with the College President, along with the AVPRAA, HR Director, and ACADFA Grievance Chair to discuss ratio, and proposed LoU language that would more explicitly commit the college to timely action in hiring to meet the ratio. I have been told that we expect to post eleven positions within the next few weeks. It's my understanding that positions will be posted once a request from SVD comes through and once rank is a little more clearly outline.

I met with the Grievance Chair and HR director on October 17<sup>th</sup> to further discuss rank and ratio. With regard to ratio, we agreed, informally that an LoU that committed the college to posting positions meet ratio within a year of our falling below it, combined with a ratio calculation formula that more accurately reflects how we actually do calculate it, might be acceptable to both parties.

I met with the AVPRAA to further discuss matters concerning ratio, technicians' role in ensuring safety, rank, and also to discuss the potential contractual implications of moving to a trimester system. For the moment, it will be treated as optional additional workload for permanent faculty.

I continue to be a part of the Academic Planning Group, and am chairing the Delivery and Sustainability working group. The APG's ultimate goal is to present a list of proposals for further exploration to Council by December 5.

I met with the Sessional Rep, Chair CCS, AVPRAA, and Manager RAA, to draft LoU language with regard to the introduction of rank or titling into the collective agreement. The resulting language was circulated to executive and senior administrative offices such as that of the President for comment, and discussion continues. For me, two key concerns in this LoU are ensuring we create mechanisms that allow us to hire permanent faculty who may not have terminal degrees, and that allow us to recognize professional practice as degree-equivalent.

The Grievance Chair and I met with the HR director on October 17 to further discuss rank. It was a lengthy and wide-ranging discussion.

We were asked to reconsider titling as it applies to sessional faculty, given that "adjunct" as we initially suggested it doesn't make sense in a Canadian context. We rejected "lecturer" as inaccurate, and settled on Instructor. This titling makes sense, insofar as one of rank's primary purposes is to make us legible to accrediting bodies, and these bodies are almost exclusively interested in faculty to whom the institution has made a commitment by way of permanent employment. Meeting the ratio, then, will only help us paint a more accurate picture of ourselves.

Also, we spent a fair amount of time discussing the manner in which rank would accurately reflect our curriculum, which is, loosely put, a hybrid of academic and applied content. Therefore, rank should reflect our curriculum and values, not imply a redirection of it. To this end, a system of rank should also account for the number of faculty whose professional experience serves in lieu of formal accreditation. We agreed to develop a process by which terminal-degree-equivalency can be measured and upgraded, and how it might be done so quickly and efficiently in the context of the hiring process, during which questions of equivalency are likely to arise. Further to this end, we agreed to clarify and improve a system by which rank promotion is evaluated.

I attended an Academic Freedom Event in Saskatoon on October 1 as the ACIFA delegate. My report submitted to ACIFA is attached.

The college has drafted an LoU creating Limited Term Appointments (LTAs) which, currently we don't have. Such positions seem useful, particularly when, say, creating short-term non-teaching faculty positions in the case of maternity leaves and so on. We responded to the draft with suggested amendments aimed at preventing abuse, all of which were adopted.

Tomorrow (Oct 23), I will attend a meeting that will begin to think through how we manage graduate teaching workload in the context of the collective agreement.

### Report from the University of Saskatchewan Academic Freedom Event Saskatoon, October 1 2014

ACAD was asked to send a delegate to this event. My thanks to ACIFA President Doug Short for thinking of us.

The trigger for this event was the firing of a Dean and his having been stripped of tenure this year—in the wake of which both the President and Provost were fired—and also the President's veto of a tenure recommendation in 2009. An arbitrator found in favour of the faculty association in that matter, but the university filed an appeal with the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal on October 15.

This event entailed presentations by Jim Turk, former Executive Director of CAUT; and Rudy Fitchbaum, President of the American AUT; as well as a panel discussion, dinner, and award presentation. My flight and teaching schedule did not allow me to stay for Fitchbaum's address or, tragically, for dinner.

The introductory remarks concerned a manifesto on Academic Freedom produced by a large group of past recipients of the 3M teaching award (but separately from the 3M foundation) based on the University of Toronto's own mission statement which they feel approaches the ideal, even if it isn't honoured at U of T.

Jim Turk's presentation and the following panel discussion were helpful, even though much of the ensuing discussion concerned the U of S internal climate, specifically.

The panel discussions were often very case-specific and didn't produce much by way of extrapolatable principles beyond what was expressed in Jim Turk's remarks. One interesting idea to emerge from it, though, was Carolyn Sale's argument that academic freedom ought to extend to and include all members of the institutional community, including senior administration, in opposition to what is currently the principle of a "cabinet" speaking with a unified voice. I would only add, from an Alberta perspective, that administrative freedom of opinion is stifled in what is effectively a single-party system such as ours, in conversations between government and the institution. So long as the PCs remain unthreatened, a school challenges them at their peril.

Key points that emerged from Turk's presentation include

The danger to academic freedom posed:

- by the emphasis on teaching over research in academic job evaluations and descriptions
- by the erosion of collegial governance in place of corporate models increasingly remote from learning
- the erosion of permanent faculty positions in place of sessional faculty who do not have job security; there is no current data for Canadian national sessional/permanent proportions in postsecondary
- attempts to redefine academic freedom to exclude intramural critique and extramural opinion (i.e. you can teach and research what you want, but can't be free to voice internal critique or an opinion on matters outside the institution). Most notably, AUCC's redefinition of Academic Freedom makes no mention of intramural critique or extramural opinion, and in a recent editorial in *The Globe & Mail* the President of the University of Alberta also denied that academic freedom extended to these arenas.
- the introduction at some institutions of "post-tenure review"
- Codes of Conduct that use vague language to attempt to "legislate civility"
- inappropriate collaborations with industry that can skew, muzzle, or direct/stifle research;
- the failure of some institutions to recognize that, unlike other workplaces, all documents produced by faculty are faculty Intellectual Property, to which the institution has no right. The only exception is documents produced in an administrative capacity.

Protecting academic freedom entails:

- most importantly: Academic Freedom language within a collective agreement, given that, unlike Americans, Canadians can't point to the equivalent of First Amendment Rights
- maintaining a high ratio of permanent faculty, who have job security
- actively exercising academic freedom by engaging in potentially controversial research rather than playing things safe so as not to cause trouble

Case Studies presented:

Ken Luckhurst was banned from Ryerson Campus for writing privately to his supervisor to recommend against appointing certain individuals to a chair position.

In the US, an individual had a job offer withdrawn from U. Illinois Urbana-Champaign because of political opinions expressed on twitter.

That's all.

### NAC Chair – Chris Frey

Good news. The proposed Collective Agreement was approved by the Board of Governors on September 20. The new salary and benefit changes will be reflected on October 15 pay cheques and will be retroactive to July 1, 2014.

My intention to commence a public study of the CA, open to all curious/interested members of the college (including faculty, staff, and technicians) continues to evolve as an idea but not as an action item. Time is an issue; however, the proposed informal forum might assist development of ACADFA's involvement with the symposium (Diana) since Academic and Artistic Freedom is an article (#26) in the CA.

I attended Joint Council (Sept.23) and heard and contributed to discussions on Ratio, Rank, Off-campus Insurance, and Academic Administrators LOU. I've reminded the HR Director of agreement expressed at JC to have interviews with the 4 Chairs and possibly the other two seconded faculty (Vice-President, Research + Academic Affairs, and Associate Vice-President, Academics and Instructional Affairs) to present their thoughts based on experience for consideration in the new LOU. An interview with FA might be useful since it also may have thoughts on what did and didn't work with the initial LOU.

I support the draft letter of understanding for Limited Term Appointments, in light of recent email correspondence between the ACADFA President and ACADFA Academic Council Rep that makes clear final decisions on LTAs requires consultation and agreement between ADACFA and Administration.

### Sessional Representative – Diana Sherlock ACADFA Sessional Report

September 23 Attended the Joint Consultation session, at which we discussed:

- Rank
- Ratio
- Off campus insurance process, coverage and forms
- Academic Administrators LOU

October 6 Attended a Rank LOU discussion and drafting session that significantly revised the original Rank LOU draft of March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Sessionals were invited to participate in these discussions as of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014. It would be important for this draft document to be shared with the broader faculty before signing, as it sets a direction for the College, which although it may not be fully adopted in its currently proposed form, will undoubtedly influence future planning policies and procedures at the College that will impact all faculty and the culture of the art college.

I have received some concerns from faculty who are unclear about what these impacts might be, particularly for sessionals, but who are also worried about voicing their opinions about Rank; an issue they see as a very "contentious" at the College.

October 6 As the Research Ethics Symposium Coordinator, I am thrilled that ACADFA has agreed to partner with ACADFA on the November and March events, taking a lead on the topic of Academic Freedom. Thank you ACADFA. And members if you have thoughts and want to get involved, please contact me.

I met with the AVPRAA to further discuss matters concerning ratio, technicians' role in ensuring safety, rank, and also to discuss the potential contractual implications of moving to a trimester system. For the moment, it will be treated as optional additional workload for permanent faculty.

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